

**Tuesdays with Tammy Nevada Libraries Forum**  
from  
**Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records**  
10 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
Tuesday  
May 12, 2020

Attending: Tammy Westergard, Norma Fowler, Bruce Douglass, Joy Holt, Betts Markle, Brett Silver, Liz Moore, NSLAPR; Jojo Campos Myers, Governor's Office of Science, Information and Technology; Melinda Van Patten, E-Rate Central; Kim Diehm, Boulder City; Amy Lauder, Diane Baker, Carson City; Amy Dodson, Douglas County; Kassie Antonucci, Elko-Lander-Eureka; Marcie Smedley, Joy Gunn, Leona Vittum-Jones, Henderson; Elizabeth Robinson, Humboldt County; Amy Geddes, Lyon County; Courtney Oberhansli, Mineral County; Forrest Lewis, Shelly Alexander, North Las Vegas; Alysha Wogee, Shanna Gibbons, Susan Wonderly, Pahrump; Kathy Brinkerhoff, Pershing County; Jeff Scott, Joan Dalusung, Washoe County; Cyndi O, NV Library CoOp; Anna Brueher, Lyon Co. School District; Mary Shultz, UNR Medical Library; Eric Walsh, Great Basin College; Maggie Farrell, UNLV; Sarah Bates, Washoe County Law Library; Randi Hunewill, Nancy Schmidt, SCLL.



## **WHAT PEOPLE ARE THINKING RIGHT NOW**



### **Strengths:**

- Libraries continue building resilience and sharing ideas through these challenging times
- Libraries will be an anchor for the DOE's MyON platform
- Libraries are providing Wi-Fi services for local governments to meet digitally and demonstrating the importance of the community institution
- Receiving recognition and praise by community press and government officials regarding services offered by the libraries
- Community fundraising is yielding results



### **Struggles:**

- Libraries and communities struggle to improve connectivity for all of Nevada.
- Providing services to those patrons who have no or limited access to digital content
- Keeping staff and public safe during phased in reopening of libraries.
- Trying to anticipate future problems and how to respond to them.



## Opportunities

- CARES Act funding available
- Building closer bonds and alliances with educational institutions
- Narrowing the digital divide in underserved areas
- Increasing awareness of summer reading activities



## Trends

- Schools and libraries are finding ways to partner and work together
- Development of broadband availability using e-rate
- New funding opportunities to close the digital divide are becoming available
- Usage of library digital resources continue to increase
- Phased-in reopening of libraries is beginning

Announcement: In keeping with best security practices, starting next week the Zoom meeting will be password protected. The password will be sent with the email reminder for next week's meeting.

Welcome – Tammy Westergard: Today's agenda involves reopening plans; update on CARES Act with guest speaker from the Governor's Office of Science, Information and Technology, Jojo Myers, who heads up the broadband initiative for Nevada; and checking in with everybody.

Reopening - NSLAPR sent out a checklist for everyone for review and comment. The checklist has been turned into a survey that is live on the NSLAPR website, and one response per library is requested by close of business on 5/13/2020. The results will provide insights and analysis for those serving as the think tank to create guidelines for the use of all libraries. Those serving on the think tank are Jeff Scott, Joan Dalusung, Diane Baker, Amy Geddes, Kassie Antonucci, Marcie Smedley and Starr Hoffman. The survey results will reveal how comfortable libraries are and where the sticking points might be. The plan is to develop a draft which will be shared next Tuesday and then sent to the library directors and NLA board. The final guidelines will then be available for the library community. If you have not sent a draft or approved reopening plan, please email to Tammy, Norma, Sulin, or Bruce.

CARES ACT - Nevada was allotted \$278,318 for the purpose of expanding digital network access, purchasing internet accessible devices, and providing technical support services. The efforts will be targeted based on data from unemployment, SNAP programs, and broadband availability. These are the guidelines we will be using for the state of Nevada.

Tammy introduced Jojo Myers, the state broadband development manager from the Governor's Office of Science, Innovation, and Technology, and Jojo added that Melinda Van Patten from E-Rate Central is also on the line.

Jojo Myers -Thank you all for the incredible difference libraries are making in the state of Nevada. We truly see the impact the library is having as an anchor institution. Between 2018 and 2020, Nevada library participation in the e-rate program grew by 256%.

The E-rate program is an FCC reimbursement program for schools and libraries that helps with expansion of broadband internet connectivity. As part of the bigger picture, e-rate participation by libraries sometimes benefits the entire community, not just the library. For example, in White Pine County, the library got fiber, and because the County Commissioners meet in the building, they are now able to do live streaming for the first time. Tribal libraries have also applied for e-rate in higher numbers

and are leveraging the libraries as community anchors in connection with computer labs in many instances. The E-Rate Central team has worked with many of you and are always available to advise and help you. OSIT contracts with E-Rate Central so there is no charge to the libraries for their support.

Tammy asked Jojo to speak more about connectivity across the state and the areas of greatest need in regard to the CARES Act criteria and unemployment across the state. Jojo replied that the majority of Nevada is rural with some rural areas being worse off than others. E-rate is calculated based on the federal School Lunch Program, and Nevada has 60-90% discount rates across the counties. Nye and Mineral counties have the highest percentages in the state. In addition to rural areas, urban areas such as North Las Vegas have high poverty rates, and poverty equals a low connectivity rate. COVID 19 has made these areas the hardest. Connectivity is difficult in these areas, and we determined they need hotspot devices, increased internet connectivity, and other devices such as Chromebooks. Because hotspots and Chromebooks are in great demand across the country, there are shortages.

In response to a question from Tammy about potential ways to leverage connectivity, Jojo replied that mesh networks are a wireless solution using different types of equipment based on the area (urban or rural). North Las Vegas would be a good example of a clustered area that would benefit from mesh networks. Gridless power ([gridlesspower.com](http://gridlesspower.com)) is another possibility which utilizes gridless nodes, uses solar power, extends 100 feet and allows a maximum of 25 users on the network at one time.

Cyndi O Nevada Library Co-operative: Added that she heard this morning that the Lincoln County library has been approved for e-rate and in Esmeralda county, the county commissioners used the library internet connectivity to conduct their meeting. This is so critical and important to flaunt what the libraries have. It is a testament to Jojo's efforts on behalf of the libraries.

Jojo added that if she is going to recommend one solution over another, she will be looking at sustainability. Mesh is a sustainable solution. Not saying that Wi-fi hotspots aren't also sustainable, but they come with additional costs and you do not know the long-term demand for those.

Tammy then asked the northern Nevada libraries for their thoughts. Jeff Scott from Washoe County said they have two kinds of disconnects - urban and rural. Two branches are good examples of that - Verdi and Duncan Trainer. Verdi is in a rural area and disconnected. Duncan Trainer is urban and disconnected. He expressed appreciation for the support for E-rate over the last few years and stated that the new Washoe County Manager has a background in telehealth and will be providing guidance on getting e-rate and using more creative platforms. Hopefully, the library will get more hotspots but sustainability is an issue because of the cost. The cost for a unit isn't that much but paying for the internet going forward is a challenge.

Tammy concluded the discussion by saying that we will be looking for the biggest needs and biggest impacts. Our plan is to synthesize the data, look at the options and look for the areas of greatest need and impact. We are going to do our best to create a matrix and application process to get this money moving and put it to work. The process is that the money comes into the state and must be put into a work program which gives a window of time to get guidance and input.

#### UPDATES:

Diane Baker: The Carson City library is starting curbside service for holds today. They are working with the City and are adapting as quickly as they can. As with all libraries, they must balance being a city or county entity and having a library board with a certain level of independence. Also, the rate of change is so rapid it can't be anticipated and requires much flexibility.

Joy Gunn: Henderson is busy making plans to bring staff back. They are not planning to start curbside service until June. They have a big population and are trying to keep everyone safe and being cautious.

Jeff Scott: Washoe's reopening plan changed four times since last week. Per county and governor's orders, we are not allowing anyone in the library until June 1<sup>st</sup>. Gave away our PPE's because we gave away materials to other agencies immediately needing it. Curbside is not happening due to social distancing and other concerns. We are looking at books holds only pickup sometime in mid-June. Patrons will pick up items from holds shelf and use self-checkout. Virtual summer reading program launches May 15<sup>th</sup>, kicks off June 1<sup>st</sup>. The three components we are looking at are: virtual programming, virtual collections, books only holding/pickup but not until mid-June. No computer access in the library. That is probably will be our biggest problem will be computer use. Other challenges involve getting cleaning supplies. Phased in reopening is off in the distance. Worried about violating open meeting rules in regards to access.

Amy Dodson: Douglas County staff started working in the library yesterday in staggered shifts. Will begin curbside service on Saturday and are considering making it a permanent option. Thank you to Carson City Library for face shields. Library will not be reopening until June 1<sup>st</sup> at the earliest. Taking one phase at a time.

Shanna Gibbons: The Pahrump library board met yesterday and came up with some good strategies for reopening. When library reopens, some board members will be at the library for the first couple of days to greet those who come in and will hand out flyers with the new rules.

Forrest Lewis: Tammy mentioned a news article featuring the North Las Vegas library. Forrest said it was nice to get the recognition and to show how libraries can help. They were doing reference service but for a different purpose than usual. He was surprised at the response and feels that everyone is looking for connections. It showed that libraries can still provide services even when everything else is shut down. He feels this time presents an opportunity for libraries to shine and prove their worth.

Nancy Schmidt: Will be meeting with NV Humanities Council and other partners in NV Reads. Thank you to those of you who volunteered to participate. I'll have an update next week.

Tammy Westergard concluded the meeting by asking every library to take the survey and saying that the results will be shared at next week's meeting.